

# Oconee County History Museum—Another Sightseeing Gem

By Mike White, FOLKS Board Chair

Here are some fun facts.

- The record low temperature in Oconee County was  $-8$  degrees on January 21, 1985 in Long Creek.
- In late 1956, just as work was starting on the Hartwell Dam, Clemson College objected to the damage that would result due to the impoundment of water, and work was halted. Of prime concern was that the playing surface of the football stadium, unless protected, would be inundated by 18 feet of water.

Oconee History Museum is working to preserve and share these stories of Oconee County and its people. Since the museum's opening in 2004, staff and volunteers have tirelessly pursued their mission to preserve and promote the history and cultural heritage of the county by providing residents and visitors with quality museum experiences. Their efforts should move the museum to the top of your sightseeing itinerary, along with the Brook Center highlighted in last month's issue of *The Sentinel*.

Today, Oconee History Museum operates two museum locations—the main Oconee History Museum and office headquarters in downtown Walhalla at 123 Brown's Square Drive, and the General Store Museum in downtown Westminster at 126 E. Main Street. Both museum locations feature expansive exhibits with authentic artifacts illustrating the stories of Oconee County communities, as well as gift shops stocked with local history books, cookbooks, children's books, toys, music, and locally made crafts. The main museum location also offers a meeting room that can be rented for meetings or special events.



Each month, Oconee History Museum offers a variety of virtual and in-person programming presented by museum staff or guest experts, including local history lectures, walking tours, craft classes, demonstrations, children's activities, music lessons, and more. Fun community programs like trivia nights, movie nights, book signings, and contra dances are more ways Oconee History Museum brings the community together. Oconee History Museum's staff also offer assistance to researchers seeking genealogical information, property history, historic cemetery locations, and more.

As a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization, Oconee History Museum is governed by an independent Board of Directors. Funding for its two museum locations is provided in part by Oconee County Department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism; the City of Walhalla; the City of Westminster; private donations; grants; museum memberships; gift shop sales; and fundraisers. Volunteers and those willing to serve in leadership roles are always welcome.

Oconee History Museum is fortunate to have a very dedicated staff of homegrown professionals. Leslie (White) Hagerty, a native of the Walhalla area, has served as Director/Curator for 12 years. Jennifer (English) Moss, a native of the Seneca area, has served as Assistant Curator/Education Specialist for 10 years. In the coming months Leslie Hagerty and Jennifer Moss will be sharing stories from Oconee County's past, while also highlighting Oconee County's many museums, historical sites, and cultural events.

## Oconee History Museum Hours & Locations

Oconee History Museum  
Walhalla, SC  
Tuesday thru Saturday  
11:00a.m.–5:00p.m.

General Store Museum  
Westminster, SC  
Thursday & Friday  
11:00a.m.–4:00p.m.  
Saturday  
11:00a.m.– 2:30p.m.

Admission is free!

\$3 per person donation is encouraged

864-638-2224

[info@oconeehistorymuseum.org](mailto:info@oconeehistorymuseum.org)

For more information about Oconee History Museum activities and services please visit [www.oconeehistorymuseum.org](http://www.oconeehistorymuseum.org) and follow them on Facebook. ❖

